The Status of the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A method for segmenting a population, comprising:

~~generating population segmentation trees based on demographic data and on behavioral data for a set of consumers~~;

defining a base level population segmentation tree <u>with a base segmentation tree defining module</u>;

defining a set of alternative level variables <u>with an alternative level variable defining module, the set of alternative level variables</u> useable as substitutes in the nodes of the <u>base level</u> population segmentation tree <u>to create a substitute level tree</u>; and

determining<u>, with a substitute split value determining module,</u> substitute split values for each node of the <u>substitute level</u> tree to enable up and down shifting between levels <u>of different precision, the substitute split value determining module to calculate the substitute split values that maintain a percentage split value of the substitute level tree that is equal to a percentage split value of the base level population segmentation tree</u>.

2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, further including determining whether a level shift is required.

3. (Original) A method according to claim 2, further including determining segments using the base level tree when no level shift is required.

4. (Original) A method according to claim 2, further including determining segments using another level when a level shift is required.

5. (Currently amended) A method according to claim [[4]] <u>1</u>, wherein <u>up and down shifting between levels of different precision comprises determining at least one segment using the substitute level tree</u> ~~a level is determined when a level shift is required~~.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein the split values are for income and age.

8.   (Original) A method according to claim 1, further including verifying the results of a segment determination when using substitute values.

9.   (Currently amended) A system for segmenting a population, comprising:

~~means for generating population segmentation trees based on demographic data and on behavioral data for a set of consumers;~~

means for defining a base level population segmentation tree, the base level population segmentation tree comprising a percentage split value in each node;

means for defining a set of alternative level variables useable as substitutes in the nodes of the base level population segmentation tree to create a substitute level tree; and

means for determining substitute split values for each node of the substitute level tree to enable up and down shifting between levels of different precision, the substitute split values calculated to maintain a percentage split value for each node of the substitute level tree that is equal to the percentage split value in each corresponding node of the base level population segmentation tree.

10.   (Original) A system according to claim 9, further including determining whether a level shift is required.

11.   (Original) A system according to claim 10, further including determining segments using the base level tree when no level shift is required.

12.   (Original) A system according to claim 10, further including determining segments using another level when a level shift is required.

13.   (Currently amended) A system according to claim [[12]] 9, wherein up and down shifting between levels of different precision comprises determining at least one segment using the substitute level tree ~~a level is determined when a level shift is required~~.

14.   (Canceled)

15.   (Original) A system according to claim 9, wherein the split values are for income and age.

16.   (Original) A system according to claim 9, further including means for verifying the results of a segment determination when using substitute values.

17.   (Currently amended) A software system ~~to execute on a computer system~~ for segmenting a population, comprising:

~~a module for generating population segmentation trees based on demographic data and on behavioral data for a set of consumers;~~

a base segmentation tree defining module for defining a base level population segmentation tree;

[[a]] an alternative level variable defining module for defining a set of alternative level variables useable as substitutes in the nodes of the base level population segmentation tree to create a substitute level tree; and

a substitute split value determining module for determining substitute split values for each node of the tree to enable up and down shifting between levels of different precision, the substitute split value determining module to calculate the substitute split values that maintain a percentage split value of the substitute level tree that is equal to a percentage split value of the base segmentation tree.

18.   (Original) A software system according to claim 17, further including determining whether a level shift is required.

19.   (Original) A software system according to claim 18, further including determining segments using the base level tree when no level shift is required.

20.   (Original) A software system according to claim 18, further including determining segments using another level when a level shift is required.

21.   (Currently amended) A software system according to claim [[20]] 17, wherein up and down shifting between levels of different precision comprises determining at least one segment using the substitute level tree ~~a level is determined when a level shift is required~~.

22.   (Canceled)

23.   (Original) A software system according to claim 17, wherein the split values are for income and age.

24.   (Original) A software system according to claim 17, further including a module for verifying the results of a segment determination when using substitute values.

25.   (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause a machine to ~~A software product for segmenting a population produced by the following steps, comprising~~:

~~generating population segmentation trees based on demographic data and on behavioral data for a set of consumers;~~

~~defining~~ define a base level population segmentation tree;

~~defining~~ define a set of alternative level variables useable as substitutes in the nodes of the base level population segmentation tree to create a substitute level tree; and

~~determining~~ determine substitute split values for each node of the tree to enable up and down shifting between levels of different precision by calculating the substitute split values to maintain a percentage split value of the substitute level tree that is equal to a percentage split value of the base level population segmentation tree.

26.   (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 25 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to ~~A software product according to claim 25, further including determining~~ determine whether a level shift is required.

27. (Currently amended) ~~A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 26~~ A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 26 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to ~~A software product according to claim 26, further including determining~~ determine segments using the base level tree when no level shift is required.

28. (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 26 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to ~~A software product according to claim 26, further including determining~~ determine segments using another level when a level shift is required.

29. (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 25 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to ~~A software product according to claim 28, wherein~~ enable up and down shifting between levels of different precision by determining at least one segment using the substitute level tree ~~a level is determined when a level shift is required~~.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 25 ~~A software product according to claim 25~~, wherein the split values are for income and age.

32. (Currently amended) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 25 having instructions stored thereon that, when executed, cause the machine to ~~A software product according to claim 25, further including means for verifying~~ verify the results of a segment determination when using substitute values.

Please add the following claims:

33. (New) A method according to claim 1, wherein the base level population segmentation tree is based on at least one of demographic data or behavioral data for a set of consumers.

34.   (New) A system according to claim 9, wherein the base level population segmentation tree is based on at least one of demographic data or behavioral data for a set of consumers.

35.   (New) A software system according to claim 17, wherein the base level population segmentation tree is based on at least one of demographic data or behavioral data for a set of consumers.

36.   (New) A machine accessible medium as defined in claim 25, wherein the base level population segmentation tree is based on at least one of demographic data or behavioral data for a set of consumers.

37.   (New) A method to segment a population comprising:
receiving, in a computer system, a base level data set having a first precision;
defining a first segmentation tree in accordance with the base level data set, the first segmentation tree comprising a plurality of base level variables, each variable associated with a base level node and having a corresponding base level value;
receiving, in the computer system, an alternate data set having a second precision different from the first precision of the base level data set; and
defining a plurality of alternate level variables, each alternate level variable associated with an alternate level node and having a corresponding alternate level value to facilitate at least one of upshifting or downshifting relative to the base level data set.

38.   (New) A method as defined in claim 1, further comprising defining a second segmentation tree in accordance with the alternate data set, the second segmentation tree comprising the plurality of alternate level variables and corresponding alternate level values.

39.   (New) A method as defined in claim 1, wherein defining the plurality of alternate level variables further comprises calculating the corresponding alternate level value to maintain a similar percentage split between the base level node and the alternate level node.

40.   (New) A method to segment a population comprising:

receiving, in a computer system, a base level data set having a first precision;

defining a segmentation tree in accordance with the base level data set, the segmentation tree having a plurality of decision nodes, each comprising a base level variable and a base level value;

calculating a percentage split for each of the plurality of decision nodes of the segmentation tree, wherein the percentage split is calculated at the corresponding base level value for the corresponding base level variable;

receiving, in the computer system, an alternate level data set having a second precision;

selecting an alternate level variable from the alternate level data set for each of the plurality of decision nodes of the segmentation tree, the alternate level variable selected in association with a relative similarity to the base level variable; and

calculating an alternate level value of the alternate level variable for each of the plurality of decision nodes, where the alternate level value is calculated to maintain the percentage split for each of the plurality of corresponding decision nodes.

41.   (New) A method as defined in claim 40, further comprising upshifting from the base level data set to the alternate level data set when the alternate level data set is more precise than the base level data set.

42.   (New) A method as defined in claim 40, further comprising downshifting from the base level data set to the alternate level data set when the alternate level data set is less precise than the base level data set.